

(57) Abstract

A method (750) for processing data packets in a gateway element comprises the steps of: comparing (751) a data packet to screening information comprising a set of rules, and processing (755) a data packet according to a rule belonging to the set of rules, the header information of said data packet matching the header information of said rule. The method is characterized in that said screening information is hierarchically structured so that it comprises a first rule, which specifies first header information, and a subset of rules relating to said first rule, and in that in said step of comparing a data packet, said data packet is compared (754, 756) to said subset of rules only if the header information of the data packet matches the header information of the first rule. A gateway element (80), an arrangement (85), and a data structure (40) comprising screening information are also presented.

Fig. 3a

I hereby certify that this correspondence as being deposited with the United States Postal Service as express mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington D.C., 20231, on October 12 192001. Express Mail Receipt No. EL719639633415

Date of Signature

10/12/01

Ronald C. Fush